

**REMARKS**

The Office Action dated June 4, 2003 has been reviewed carefully and the application has been amended in a sincere effort to place the claims in condition for allowance.

**Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)**

Claims 2, 5, 13-14 and 17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by United States Patent No. 6,324,169 ("Roy").

Briefly, Applicants' invention is a method and system for dynamically allocating conferencing resources in an expandable telecommunications system. When a conference requested is received, Applicants' invention involves identifying the type of conference that is being requested (such as a critical conference) and then determining whether or not system resources are available and then reserving those resources. More specifically, two types of resources for conferencing are allocated in accordance with two different aspects of the invention. First, the CPU/Matrix card (the switching node) reviews the DSP resources available at the time of a conference request. Depending on the type of conference, the CPU/Matrix card locates and selects the DSP chip having the correct amount of available channels. For example, if a conference is likely to grow, the DSP chip selected will be that which has the greatest amount of available channels. If a conference is critical, the DSP chip may be selected that is currently handling no other conferences and the DSP chip will be programmed such that

any further conferences will be prohibited from being created on that chip in order to maximize the protection available for the ongoing critical conference and to allow new participants to join the conference while it is in progress. Other protections are also available for the situation in which devices are hotplugged into the system such that the conference will be protected and conferees will not be dropped even though items are hotplugged into the system while the conference is in progress. If a conference is identified as a static conference, the DSP will be located on a best fit basis, meaning the system will attempt to fit as many conferees as possible on a single chip in order to enhance efficiency of assigning conferences and allocation of resources.

Secondly, the CPU/Matrix card assigns time slots on internal buses that carry information between line cards, which are associated with the PSTN, other networks and other nodes in the system. Even though suitable interfaces for performing communications using ATM (asynchronous transfer mode) signaling are available in Applicants' nodes, other types of signaling protocols or communication protocols can be accommodated at appropriate network/line interfaces. For example, as indicated at line 29 of page 6 of the Specification, "The network 112 may also be implemented with any of a variety of other types of communication networks including Ethernet or other types of LANs, wireless communication networks, the PSTN (ATM/sonet), or the Internet." Accordingly, participants coupled via many types of communication networks can be simultaneously joined during a particular conference. This is because the nodes which

carry the conferenced information can communicate with any port associated with the system.

Roy, on the other hand, describes a conferencing service, which is a multimedia conference service established over a wide area network interconnecting non-guaranteed quality of service LANs. This is a specific case of using an ATM network to provide the conferencing resources to dispersed locations interconnected by the ATM network. Those locations are indicated in the drawings as single computers 1-1 and 1-2, for example. As indicated in column 6, beginning at line 25 of Roy,

Every conferee (a "conferee" may be a person who is operating a computer or it may be an autonomous computer) sets up the communication for multipoint multimedia conferencing via bridge 7. A point-to-point communication flow is set up between the bridge 7 and each end station or end system participating in the conference (e.g., computers 1-1 and 1-2).

The Examiner has indicated that the two nodes being conferencing nodes that perform a conference between participants who are connected at any port are anticipated by routers connected to these work stations such as elements 1-1 through 1-5, each equipped with multimedia conferencing program applications.

However, Applicants' invention does not require connection to a particular PC workstation that has been previously programmed with a special conferencing application program. Applicants' claimed node is a programmable switching node that can serve as many different networks as are coupled to it by the network/line interfaces.

More specifically, as shown in Figs. 1 and 2, a programmable switching node such as the programmable switching node 110a includes the components illustrated in Fig. 2. As illustrated in Fig. 2, the switching node is connected to an internodal network ("the ring"). It is also connected to line cards that have network line interfaces, with either the PSTN, or a wireless network, and is also connected to the host. The CPU/Matrix card directs switching that can occur using nodal switches 244a and redundant nodal switch 244b. The DSP cards 236 perform the conferencing in a conferencing node, for example. Thus, a person can join the conference who is using a land line telephone connected traditionally to the PSTN, a wireless telephone, a computer work station (via a T1 line, for example, or via the Internet) or another private network, such as that illustrated as item 116 in Fig. 1. Thus, Applicants' invention is not restricted to an ATM network that is set up to communicate with individual PCs that have been programmed to perform conferencing. There is no special programming required in the equipment being used by the conferees in Applicants' invention.

In order to enhance this distinction which Applicants' invention has over the Roy reference, Applicant has amended claim 2 to positively recite the programmable switching node (such as the switching node 110 in Fig. 1).

Independent claim 17 has been similarly amended.

Claims 5, 13 and 14 depend directly or indirectly upon independent claim 2, which has been amended herein. For the reasons hereinbefore stated, it is respectfully submitted that these dependent claims are also allowable.

**Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103**

Claims 7-14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Roy in view of United States Patent No. 6,006,269 ("Phaal").

Phaal discloses a messaging system in which messages are assigned a priority and are submitted via an admission control safeway based upon the assigned priority. Simply combining Phaal's admission control gateway with Roy's ATM conferencing network, does not result in Applicants' invention of, for example, of claim 7. Phaal teaches admitting new messages from users during a session in progress, if resources are available. Applicants' invention instead guarantees conferencing resources being available, even if that conference changes in size. Thus, Applicants' invention is specifically ensuring that a new participant can join a conference, while in progress, and is not simply determining whether that individual can join a conference in progress. Thus, even if Roy is combined with Phaal, it does not disclose, teach or suggest Applicants' invention, as claimed in claim 7.

Similarly, claims 8-12 of the Applicants' invention involve providing conferencing services by allocating resources depending upon the type of conference being identified. These matters are not rendered obvious by Phaal's priority messaging system being combined with Roy's ATM conferencing system. Each of these claims is dependent directly or indirectly upon claim 2, which has been distinguished from Roy. For example, inter alia, Roy requires an ATM network to communicate with computer workstations that have been suitably programmed to perform a conferencing function.

Claim 2 does not include this requirement. In addition, simply adding Phaal's messaging priority system to the ATM conferencing system of Roy does not result in Applicants' ability to interface with many different types of networks and many different types of equipment while assigning conferences that can be comparatively large and can have participants joining and exiting a conference in progress. Applicants' system can also enhance efficiency by using the "best fit" mode, for example (claim 14).

Neither Roy alone nor Phaal alone, suggests Applicants' claimed invention, and the combination of the two references simply does not suggest, teach or render obvious Applicants' claimed invention.

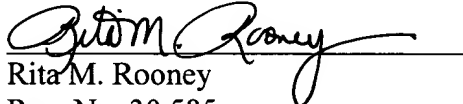
Applicant gratefully acknowledges the indication of allowable subject matter with respect to claims 3-4 and 15-16 and 18. Claims 3-4 and 15-16 depend directly or indirectly upon claim 2, and claim 18 depends upon claim 17. Based upon the foregoing amendments and arguments, it is respectfully submitted, for the reasons hereinbefore stated, that these claims are allowable as written.

**SUMMARY**

All of the claims have been amended either directly or through dependency. It is respectfully submitted that the application is now in condition for allowance. Please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned in order to advance the prosecution of this application in any respect.

Please charge any additional fee occasioned by this paper to our Deposit Account No. 03-1237.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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